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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/766,926	01/30/2004	Naoki Sashida	1359.1088	3971
21171 7590 02/07/2007 STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005			EXAMINER VAUTROT, DENNIS L	
			ART UNIT 2167	PAPER NUMBER
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		02/07/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/766,926	Applicant(s) SASHIDA ET AL.	
	Examiner Dennis L. Vautrot	Art Unit 2167	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 November 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The applicants' amendment, filed 13 November 2006, has been received, entered into the record and considered.
2. As a result of the amendment, claims 1, 6, and 11 - 14 were amended. Claims 1-14 are pending in the application.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 - 14 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1 – 3, 5, 7 – 8, 10 – 11, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Edlund et al.** (6,484,162) in view of **Stier et al.** (6,587,847).

6. Regarding claims 1, 11, and 13, **Edlund et al.** (hereinafter **Edlund**) teaches a database search system, method and program product for searching a database for data, comprising: a unit for receiving an input of a message (See column 4, lines 46-49 "The form window accepts a user input for a query label and for a corresponding query description, both of which will be associated with the search query in the Query Repository."), in a case where the input number measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value (See specification of the instant application, page 10, line 10 where the predetermined number for the threshold value may be 1, as it is in **Edlund**); and

a unit for storing the input message in a know-how database under a condition that the input message is associated with all the search conditions input during an execution period of the search processing (See column 5, lines 1-6 "It should be understood that the label/description pairs stored in the Query Repository are associated with search queries that are also stored therein, and which can be retrieved once their associated label/description pair is identified and selected.")

Edlund does not explicitly disclose a unit for receiving an input of a message describing know-how information about a problem occurring during the search processing from a user, and a unit for measuring an input number of search conditions input during a period from a start to an end of search processing.

However, **Stier et al.** (hereinafter **Stier**) teaches describing a unit for receiving an input of a message describing know-how information about a problem occurring during

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the search processing from a user (see column 8, lines 56 – 61 “When the agent 13 recognizes that her query represents missing, incorrect, or incomplete knowledge in the knowledge base, before saving the interaction, she may create a memo outlining the problem with the knowledge base and suggesting the knowledge that should be added to the knowledge base.” Here, the problem that occurs is incomplete or missing information. And See FIG 5, showing the GUI screen for the input of the above mentioned information. And see column 8, lines 22 – 32 showing additional problems occurring during the search processing by the user/agent.), and a unit for measuring an input number of search conditions input during a period from a start to an end of search processing (See column 12, lines 13-20 “The number of knowledge base queries for the domain would be the total number of knowledge base queries, which could be developed by query counter capability...of the knowledge monitoring system, which would have a query counter to store the number of queries saved between a beginning and end of the selected period of time.”)

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of **Edlund** with know-how description and the query counter of **Stier** because knowing the number of queries allows the system to determine when there have been more than a set number of queries entered which could signal there was trouble finding the desired result. One would have also been motivated to combine these references because they both are related to query processing and optimization, for use in knowledge databases. It is for this reason that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include describing know-how information about a problem

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occurring during the search processing from a user, and a unit for measuring an input number of search conditions input during a period from a start to an end of search processing.

7. Regarding claims 2 and 7, **Edlund** additionally teaches during execution of the search processing, the search conditions input by the user are compared with search conditions stored in the know-how database every time the search conditions are received (See column 4, lines 55-63 "When the Label Manager receives the user search query, the Label Manager stores the search query, the query label, and the query description in the Query Repository. The Label Manager also provides the query label and query description to the Query Search Engine then compares the received query label and description to the label/description pairs stored in the Query Repository to find similar stored search queries."), and in a case where a predetermined number of or more search conditions are matched with each other, the message associated with the search conditions stored in the know-how database is output to the user (See column 5, lines 7-9 "The Query Search Engine identifies the most similar stored queries according to a predetermined criteria of relevance.")

8. Regarding claims 3 and 8, **Edlund** additionally teaches when the user inputs the message on know-how, another or a plurality of users to be provided with the message is specified, and the message is output only to the another or plurality of users (See column 3, lines 61 – column 4, line 3 "The system may also associate search queries

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with a user identification (ID), to further facilitate communication of search information among users and sharing of search strategies... In the preferred embodiment, authorized users can retrieve search histories for multiple users of the system, not just their own search histories.” and column 8 lines 29-34 “With respect to the selection of a new user ID, the Query Interface can resolve issues of authorization and network security to control access to other user query histories, if desired.”)

9. Regarding claims 5 and 10, **Edlund** additionally teaches when the user inputs the message on know-how, the search condition which is associated with know-how is selectable by the user from a plurality of the search conditions (See column 4, lines 46-49 “The form window accepts a user input for a query label and for a corresponding query description, both of which will be associated with the search query in the Query Repository.” Here, the user selects which condition is associated with the query description, referred to in the claim as know-how.)

10. Claims 4 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Edlund et al.** (6,484,162) in view of **Stier et al.** (6,587,847) as applied to claims 1 and 6 respectively above and further in view of **Birkhoelzer et al.** (US 2003/0140030). **Edlund et al.** (hereinafter **Edlund**) and **Stier et al.** (hereinafter **Stier**) teach a system substantially as claimed. **Edlund** and **Stier** fail to teach the message is voice data storing uttered contents of the user. However **Birkhoelzer et al.** teaches message is voice data storing uttered contents of the user (See page 2, paragraph [0036] “The user

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computer stores the voice data in a voice datafile that it communicates to the reception computer.”) It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Edlund** and **Stier** with the voice data storage of **Birkhoelzer et al.** because one of the goals of the invention is to make the entry easier for the user, and if the user is allowed to just speak the know-how information, then the step of actually typing it into the system is removed, and theoretically is made simpler to store the information. It is for this reason that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include the message is voice data storing uttered contents of the user.

11. Claims 6, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Edlund** in view of **Dettinger et al.** (hereinafter **Dettinger** US 2004/0167873) and further in view of **Stier**.

Edlund teaches a database search system, method and program product for searching a database for data, comprising: a unit for receiving an input of a message (See column 4, lines 46-49 “The form window accepts a user input for a query label and for a corresponding query description, both of which will be associated with the search query in the Query Repository.”)

a unit for storing the input message in a know-how database under a condition that the input message is associated with all the search conditions input during an execution period of the search processing (See column 5, lines 1-6 “It should be understood that the label/description pairs stored in the Query Repository are

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associated with search queries that are also stored therein, and which can be retrieved once their associated label/description pair is identified and selected.”)

Edlund does not explicitly disclose a unit for measuring a necessary time taken from a start to an end of search processing and receiving the input as mentioned above in a case where the necessary time measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value, and a unit for receiving an input of a message describing know-how information about a problem occurring during the search processing from a user.

However, **Dettinger** teaches a unit for measuring a necessary time taken from a start to an end of search processing and receiving the input as mentioned above in a case where the necessary time measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value (See page 1, paragraph [0010] “...determining whether a query runtime threshold has been exceeded upon receiving each incremental input and prior to receiving a request to execute the query; and notifying the user if the query runtime threshold has been exceeded.”)

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Edlund** with the timing unit from **Dettinger** because by keeping track of the time for the search queries, more efficient choices can be made as well as faster queries or know-how displayed when the timing threshold is reached. It is for this reason that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include a unit for measuring a necessary time taken from a start to an end of search processing and receiving the input as mentioned above in a case where the

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necessary time measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value.

Additionally, **Stier** teaches a unit for receiving an input of a message describing know-how information about a problem occurring during the search processing from a user (see column 8, lines 56 – 61 “When the agent 13 recognizes that her query represents missing, incorrect, or incomplete knowledge in the knowledge base, before saving the interaction, she may create a memo outlining the problem with the knowledge base and suggesting the knowledge that should be added to the knowledge base.” Here, the problem that occurs is incomplete or missing information. And See FIG 5, showing the GUI screen for the input of the above mentioned information. And see column 8, lines 22 – 32 showing additional problems occurring during the search processing by the user/agent.).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of **Edlund** and **Dettinger** with know-how description and the query counter of **Stier** because knowing the number of queries allows the system to determine when there have been more than a set number of queries entered which could signal there was trouble finding the desired result. One would have also been motivated to combine these references because they are related to query processing and optimization, for use in knowledge databases. It is for this reason that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include describing know-how information about a problem occurring during the search processing from a user, and a unit for measuring an input

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number of search conditions input during a period from a start to an end of search processing.

Conclusion

12. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

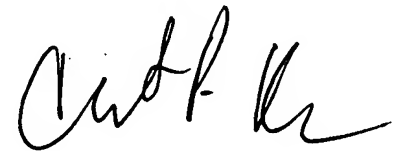
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dennis L. Vautrot whose telephone number is 571-272-2184. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cottingham can be reached on 571-272-7079. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Dv
29 January 2007



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